

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT JA

SUBJ: KYOTO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

REF: TOKYO 4509

SUMMARY: ON APR 7, INCUMBENT TORAZO NINAGAWA SQUEEZED BY
CHALLENGER KAZUTAKA OHASHI TO WIN KYOTO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION.
END SUMMARY.

1. ON APR 7, KYOTO GOVERNOR TORAZO NINAGAWA (77) SQUEEZED BY
CHALLENGER KAZUTAKA OHASHI (62) TO WIN REELECTION TO SEVENTH
CONSECUTIVE TERM. VOTE MARGIN OF 523,708 TO 519,208 WAS SO
NARROW THAT NINAGAWA DID NOT CLAIM VICTORY UNTIL 99 PERCENT
OF BALLOTS COUNTED ON APR 8.

2. NIN"-, CLEARLY ON DEFENSIVE IN FINAL DAYS OF CAMPAIGN
(REFTEL), WAS APPARENTLY HAMPERED BY GROWING PUBLIC SENTIMENT
THAT HE HAD BEEN IN OFFICE TOO LONG, WAS TOO OLD, AND HAD
CONCEDED TOO MUCH POWER TO JCP. MOREOVER, STRIFE-RIVEN
JSP PROVIDED ONLY MEAGER SUPPORT. CAPITALIZING ON THESE
FACTORS, OHASHI WAGED VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN, EFFECTIVELY
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UTILIZED DISPARATE LDP, DSP AND KOMEITO BACKING, AND

PROJECTED IMAGE OF MAN OF PRINCIPLE FIGHTING GOOD FIGHT IN
FACE OF GREAT ODDS. IN DOING SO, HE ALMOST ACHIEVED MAJOR
UPSET, LOSING BY ONLY 4,500 VOTES OUT OF SLIGHTLY OVER
1 MILLION CAST.

3. VOTING RATE OF 63.8 PERCENT WAS WELL BELOW 72.9 PERCENT
RATE FOR 1970 ELECTION WHEN NINAGAWA EASILY DEFEATED LDP
CHALLENGER 636,000 VOTES TO 491,000. ALTHOUGH MEDIA AND
POLITICAL PARTIES HAD GIVEN ELECTION HEAVY PLAY, CONFUSION
IN VOTERS' MINDS OCCASIONED BY JSP SPLIT, PROBABLE
DISINCLINATION OF SOME CONSERVATIVE VOTERS TO SUPPORT EITHER
CANDIDATE AND LATE AFTERNOON RAIN PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED TO
LOW TURNOUT.

4. ALTHOUGH NINAGAWA SUPPORTERS MIGHT TAKE HEART FROM FACT
THEY AGAIN SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED QTE CITADEL OF REFORMISM UNQTE,
THEIR VICTORY (WHICH REQUIRED MASSIVE JCP EFFORT) WAS NOT
IMPRESSIVE. JSP HAS NO DOUBT SUFFERED DROP IN PRESTIGE AS
RESULT OF NINAGAWA'S HAIR-BREADTH VICTORY. MOREOVER, EDA
FACTION CAN BE COUNTED ON TO RENEW ATTACKS ON JSP LEADERSHIP,
CITING KYOTO ELECTION RESULTS AS EVIDENCE OF MISTAKEN JSP
COOPERATION WITH JCP.
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